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SUBJECT: THE ELECTORAL PROCESS BEGINS

1. President Alejandro Toledo, on 12/8, officially proclaimed the dates for the next general election (4/9/06) and, should it be necessary, presidential run-off (5/7/06). Currently four alliances and 21 individual parties have registered to present candidates for President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, 120 congressional seats, and, for the Andean Parliament, five legislators and 10 alternates. Up to 14 additional parties are attempting to register by the deadlines for presenting presidential and congressional candidates.

2. The electoral calendar runs as follows:

-- 12/10/05: deadline for registering electoral alliances. A total of four alliances registered: "Unidad Nacional" ("National Unity" - made up of the Popular Christian, National Solidarity and Renovation parties), the "Central Front" (made up of the Accion Popular, Somos Peru and National Independent Coordinator parties), "Decentralized Harmonization" (Social Democratic Party and the Peruvian Humanist Movement), and "Alliance for the Future" (the pro-Fujimori New Majority and Change 90 parties).

-- 12/19/05: deadline for parties' internal elections for presidential and vice presidential nominations.

-- 01/09/06: deadline for registering presidential/vice presidential tickets.

-- 01/18/06; deadline for parties to select their congressional candidates.

-- 01/19/06: deadline for the National Electoral Board to approve the list of eligible voters.

-- 02/08/06: deadline for the registration of congressional candidates.

-- 04/09/06: first round of elections for all elective offices.

-- 05/07/06: second round of elections for president/vice presidents, should no ticket receive an absolute majority in the first round.

3. The presidential/vice presidential vote will be held on a nationwide basis. The ticket that obtains an absolute majority of the popular vote wins. If no ticket achieves this majority in the first round on 04/09/06, a second round will be held four weeks later.

4. Congressional seats are apportioned on a district basis, with each of the country's 24 departments, plus the city of Callao, entitled to one legislator each. The remaining 95 seats will be divided between the 25 electoral districts based on the each district's percentage of the national population. Lima, the most populous district, has 35 seats, while Madre de Dios, the least populated, has but one.

5. Voters cast their ballots for a single party's congressional list in their respective districts, and will also be entitled to register up to two "preferential votes" for individual candidates from the party they chose. In order for a party to obtain a congressional seat, it must either receive four percent of the national congressional vote, or win six seats in a single electoral district (in other words, in Lima). The parties that meet either of these requirements will then divide up the congressional seats district-by-district, based on the percentage of the vote obtained in each respective district.

6. The individuals elected to the Congress will be the candidates from the winning parties who gained the most preferential votes. For example, if party "A" runs five candidates in Puno and wins 40 percent of the vote, it will be entitled to at least two of the five congressional seats. These seats will go to the two party "A" candidates who received the largest number of preferential votes. Thus, while parties can rank their candidates in order of preference, the voters have the power to alter this rank order in determining who will actually represent them in Congress.

17. The voting for five Andean Parliament legislators and 10 alternates will be decided on the basis of a single nationwide district. As with the national congressional race, voters will choose between different party lists and can cast up to two "preferential votes" for individual candidates on the list they choose. The winners will also be determined on the same basis as the national congressional election, with seats distributed among the parties based on their proportional vote (provided they obtain at least four percent support), and the candidates ranked within each party based on their "preferential vote" tallies.

18. The Supreme Decree convoking the general elections also instructed the Ministry of Economy and Finance to take the necessary steps to transfer the funds budgeted for carrying out the elections. The National Office for Electoral Processes (ONPE) is due to receive some 300 million Soles (USD 88 million), and ONPE Director Magdalena Chu has warned that delays in providing this funding would complicate her organization's ability to organize the elections, print up the ballots and candidate lists, and provide the necessary training for officials and the citizenry.

19. Septel will report on the status of the presidential and congressional races as the formal electoral campaign kicks off.

POWERS